

Direct Mail Marketing Is the New Old School

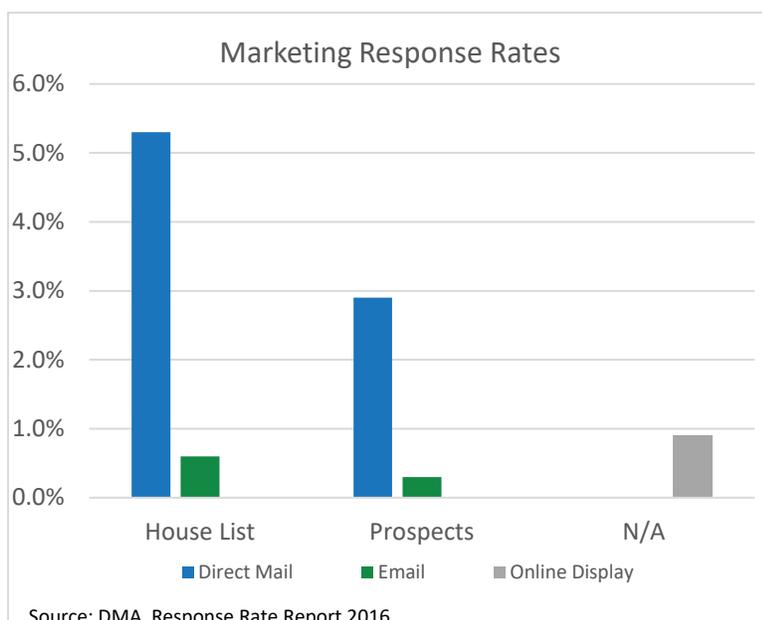
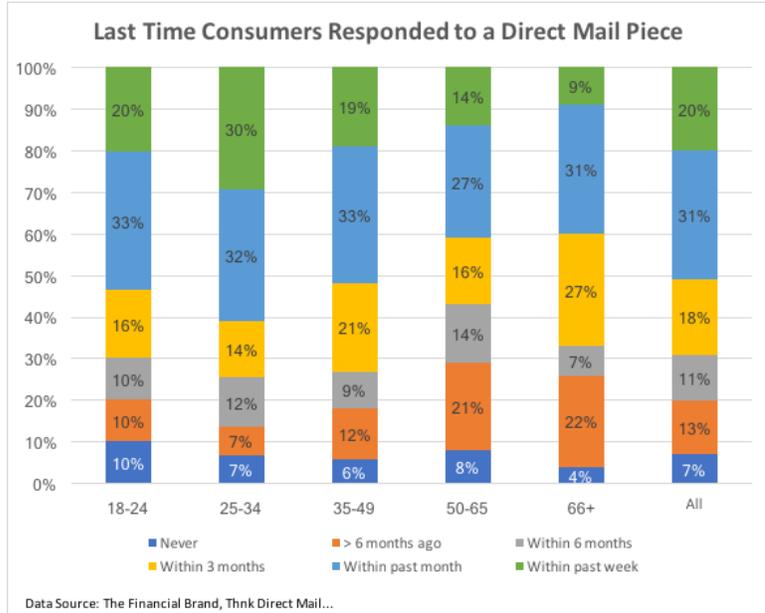
Direct mail marketing is Gucci with the millennials, gnarly with Gen X, and boss with the boomers.

It seems to be ‘common knowledge’ that seniors want paper, and millennials only want digital, but this is false. Integrated marketing campaigns – those that include properly targeted digital good old snail mail – work best. In fact, direct mail performs very well across all age demographics. About 75% of households at least scan direct mail advertisements, per the [U.S. Postal Service](#).

How many Capital 1 offers do you personally receive each month? Probably a week doesn’t go by that you don’t! Financial services companies are the highest users of direct mail; 71% of banks and credit unions use direct mail, according to the DMA Response Rate Report 2016 by Deborah Haskel.

Nearly half of companies (46%) plan to maintain their direct mailing levels, while another 35% plan to increase. Modern data analytics and targeting make direct mail offers even more worthwhile to financial institutions and their recipients.

Psychology is behind direct mail’s effectiveness, too. When people handle physical mail, they do



so for a longer time than a fleeting digital ad, so they are more likely to remember it, according to a [study by the USPS](#). Additionally, the USPS study used eye tracking, biometrics and functional MRI technology and found physical ads triggered activity in the ventral striatum area of the brain, which is responsible for value and desirability and can signal a greater intent to purchase.

Direct mail actually stimulated an emotional response in participants of the USPS study, so visuals and

messaging have to be on point for your target audiences. That level of saturation, 71% of financial institutions, also means that marketing must be on message, speak appropriately to different consumers, and be creative.

Millennials will not give your company the time of day if your product and message are not aligned to demonstrate your authenticity. Being trustworthy and honest is particularly important to millennials, Nadia Goodman wrote in Entrepreneur. Millennials are most concerned about either convenience or pricing in a world that allows them to simply download copious items in minutes, such as movies or music, for free. Send them online for a scavenger hunt with a direct marketing piece for which the prize is music downloads or entry to win concert tickets.

Gen X is the product of the first Gulf War and has watched technology evolve while job security flew out the window, according to Robert Klara in Adweek. Divorce rates peaked in their teenage years. Gen X is comparatively small but in their prime earning years and work hard to keep it that way. Gen X has issues with authority, so messaging can't be demanding but once respect is earned they appreciate reliability, safety and security. Coupons can work well with Gen X, Mary Lister blogged for WordStream, as they focus on saving for college and home ownership. Fully 86% of this generation brings in the mail every day and 68% have used coupons they received in the mail.

Boomers like to speak with someone before buying a product or service, but they're willing to pay for it. They're susceptible to brand loyalty and upselling, so keep them once you get them, Lister continued. Discounts won't work but upsell them on the value of a product or service. They enjoy splurging on high-end, quality items and brands in their retirement, especially cars and new technology, 4Imprint reported. Boomers consider themselves in better physical shape than their predecessors, so use active images of people about 10 years younger than them hiking or running after grandchildren.

Mailers don't have to be flat and boring. Grab attention for a credit card balance transfer promotion by mailing out tagboard wallets with cards inside that include incentives to transfer their balances to your card both online and in-branch. Promote a vacation loan special by mailing out LifeSavers candies to represent the real lifesavers on a cruise ship. Fight with a message you know is authentic: Credit unions are here to help. And provide that message in an integrated marketing campaign that gives consumers something to hold on to.